

Prof. Puran Singh



Prof. Puran Singh

Poet, Philosopher, Scientist

105th Birth Anniversary

CHAIRMAN : Sardar Buta Singh
Union Minister of Agriculture

CHIEF GUEST : Smt. Sushila Rohatgi
Minister of State for Education
and Culture.

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Colony, New Delhi-110024.



सत्यमेव जयते

PRIME MINISTER

New Delhi
February 10, 1986

Dear Major Ahluwalia,

I am happy to hear of the celebrations being organised on the 105th Birth Anniversary of Professor Puran Singh by the Puran Singh Memorial Committee.

The Professor was a distinguished son of Punjab and India. His multi-faceted personality and his dedication and zeal for whatever work he took up will be remembered for long. His achievements were made possible by a deep understanding and genuine love for his own people and country. There are many lessons which our younger generation can learn from his life and his works.

I send my best wishes for the success of the celebrations being held in honour of this noted patriot, poet, philosopher and scientist.

Yours sincerely,

Major G.S. Ahluwalia
Secretary General
Professor Puran Singh Memorial Committee
C-517, Defence Colony
New Delhi

12/10

Prof. Puran singh

1881-1931

"The most interesting thing in art is the personality of the artist. If it is singular, I am willing to excuse a thousand faults", Said Somerset Maugham. So a great life has to be presented as it is. Our scales of values do not apply to it.

Puran Singh was born on 17 Feb. 1881 in a small village called Salhad near Abbottabad (now in Pakistan). He tells us "Salhad is situated on a little perennial hill brook. It has its own little water falls and pools. His father S. Kartar Singh-was a petty Revenue officer and mother-Parma Devi whom he was more attached and said,"She was clothed in the Guru's Hymns."

Puran Singh's infancy in the beautiful open spaces of Hazara, and the religious lullabies of his mother, left in him deep impressions, and an unquenchable appetite for natural beauty and spiritual yearnings, which remained all through his life and which echoed and re-echoed many a time in his life's journey.

That the impressions of child-hood specially of the first five years, impart a special cut to the mind and form the pattern grain in the timber of man's subsequent personality. True to it, Puran Singh developed a love for nature and love for the Guru. His child-hood love of falling snow :

"The flakes of snow falling, falling from heaven like milk-white locust every tree on the hills filled my eyes with a strange fantastic delight".

His early education was in a mosque and in a Gurdwara. Later in 1886 he joined a small Missionary school at Havelian. He was a precocious child and the Maulvi prophesied that Puran Singh would become a great man and that his spiritual food was love, without which he could not remain alive.

In 1893 Puran Singh was successful in his Anglo-Vernacular Middle Examination, and for further studies the family shifted to Rawalpindi, where he joined the Mission High School. As a student he stayed for two years in Rawalpindi, and in 1895 he passed his Matriculation Examination. Then he went to Lahore for further studies where he joined the D. A. V. College.

In 1899, the Biradri (Community of close relations) awarded him a scholarship for higher studies and he left for Tokyo the same year. The journey to Japan and his stay there have been artistically described in his autobiography "On Paths of Life." The Japanese way of living, and the natural beauty made his mind re-echo his child-hood impressions of the Hazara District. Puran Singh in Japan was vibrating with emotions of Buddhistic thought and with a passionate desire for mingling with nature. In Japan he was admitted to the Imperial University, and was studying Pharmaceutical (Applied) Chemistry. His training as a Chemist is reflected mostly in his literary creations. Although studying Chemistry Puran Singh remained drenched in Budhistic thought and the atmosphere of Japan. It was here in 1900 that

Puran Singh met Swami Rama Tirath. The meeting is described by Puran Singh thus :--

".....But as he entered, his presence was resonant with song; his very flesh sounded like a flowing stream. There was a sweet Divine murmur around him. A murmur that is no more the feature of modern human personality. Where he sat or slept, the murmurs were still audible."

"I have come to seek you. Your name was on my lips on the deck of the steamer. I was singing of the Infinite. And you are the Infinite". That is how he accosted me. I felt like a woman agitated with passion for a strange great man.

"My aim Sir, from my infancy, has been to turn a Yogi."

"You are a Yogi. What is Yoga but rising above the body consciousness, above the finite, and being infinite at all points of self-consciousness....."

Vedanta with Puran Singh was not a mere philosophical exercise but a living emotion. In this state of mind he lectured in Japan. Here he met nationalist Indians and Japanese intellectuals and developed a love for the freedom of India. In 1904, Puran Singh returned to India in the saffron robes of a sannyasi.

At the instance of his dying sister Ganga, Puran Singh agreed to marry the girl he was betrothed. In 1904 Puran Singh married Maya and in the first interview with his bride he took a promise from her to live a life of detachment and love for humanity. Maya Puran Singh true to her

vows lived a life with the emotional genius as he had stipulated. Puran Singh and his newly wedded wife came to Lahore, and lived in a Haveli in Anarkali.

Later in 1904 Puran Singh became the principal of Victoria Diamond Jubilee Hindu Technical Institute, Lahore. For two years Puran Singh and his wife led an ideal life. Maya Puran Singh learning music from the great musicians Vishnu Digamber, and Puran Singh restarting the publication of his magazine, "The Thundering Dawn" which he had started in Tokyo. In Lahore, Puran Singh although living in poverty yet his home was open to all. One student, Mitra of the Government College, Lahore got typhoid, and Puran Singh as was his wont brought Mitra to his home for treatment and nursing. He asked Maya Puran Singh to nurse him.

During the illness of Mitra, Khudadad and Hardayal, who were also studying in the Government College with Mitra, used to come to visit him. Their visits resulted in a life-long friendship between Puran Singh and Khudadad, which became as a beacon of light of what true friendship should be like. The flame of this inter communal fraternity continued for 23 years even after the death of his friend Puran Singh. For Khudadad (who later became Dr. Khudadad, obtaining Ph.D. from Germany) as a dutiful son looked after the interests of the friend's sons as their elder; sacrificing his own personal glory and fame which he could have achieved other-wise as a research chemist.

While at Lahore, Puran Singh developed friendships with poet Mohammad Iqbal, Hardyal,

Shafi and others. Around him gathered emotionally oriented intellectuals and politically minded young men.

In 1905 Dr. Khudadad persuaded Prof. Puran Singh to attend a Science Conference at Banaras. Puran Singh read a very important paper at the conference which was highly appreciated.

Puran Singh however, in 1905, along with his wife, Maya Puran Singh went to Dehradun as there was a gathering of all the disciples of Swami Ram Tirath to bid farewell to Swami ji who was going to Tehri State. Puran Singh was Swami Ram Tirath's favourite disciple and was respected by all other disciples. It was at this meeting that Swami Ram Tiratha said "Now henceforth consider Puran as my own image."

In 1907, when the British Govt. started the Imperial Forest Research Institute in Dehradun, and they were looking about for a bio-chemist, Puran Singh whose fame had spread by his paper which he had read in the Banaras Conference, appeared a good proposition. The job of Chemical Adviser of Imperial Forest Research Institute was offered to him. Puran Singh accepted and continued in this post till 1918.

Puran Singh's home at Dehradun became a great resort of literary activities and he wrote profusely in Punjabi and English. Khudadad's support was reinforced by the coming in 1914, of Sardar Balbir Singh (later Dr. Balbir Singh), who also was brought up by Puran Singh and Maya Puran Singh as son, along with their children. Here it may be pointed out that Puran Singh would write at one sitting and would leave the writing only when

it was finished, whether it was an article or book. It appeared as if he was inspired to a higher level of mental life, and the thoughts and emotions opened the flood gates of his literary genius which could not be stemmed.

In 1918 Puran Singh resigned from the post of Research Chemist when British Government appointed a Junior Chemist as his head. In 1920 Prince of Gwalior offered him the position of Advisor in Scindia Chemicals Works which Puran Singh developed.

However he left Gwalior in 1924 and established Rosha Grass Farm on 400 acres of Land leased to him by the Govt. in Sheikhupura. Here again destiny was not kind to him. His entire farm and plantation was destroyed by floods.

This is how he describes the tragic event :

"Blessed it is my Spring Wheel broke,
"My life from toil has been released."

The health of Puran Singh by these setbacks deteriorated and he remained sick for a few months and passed away on 31 March 1931.

Such men are really not of the world, but "Outsiders", who visit this world and may find themselves out of tune. Nevertheless, their footprints on the sands of life diffuse perfume for centuries. Their literary work with age like a fine wine, gets purer and stronger and inspires us for all time to come.

Philosophy of Prof. Puran singh

It is nationalism (unity of the country) and not regionalism (devotion to a region only)

It is Spiritualism and not materialism (excessive devotion to bodily wants and financial success).

It is rationalism (Belief regulated by reason) and not dogmatism (asserting belief over bearing arrogantly)

It is Liberalism (broad mindedness) and not parochialism (narrowness of view)

PATROTISM

"Patrotism of the affectionate attachment for one's property in the shape of his country can't be generated by philosophising. It comes naturally, it cannot be forced in by thinking. In certain climes and under the driving force of traditions, it is as natural a feeling as the love of a brother for his sister. The passionate love of woman, the chivalirous spirit of protecting her and the home, even at the cost of life, the love of death in times of invasion by an invador, the complete refusal to accept the life of slavery, are the elements in human consciousness which go to make up the healthy feeling of petriotism."

PURAN SINGH

From "The Story of Swami Rama Tirath"

Seven Secrets of Success of Swami Ram Tirath

1. Work, Work, and incessant Work.

This is the first principle of success, follow the policy of river, ever progressing, ever assimilating, ever adopting itself to the environment and ever performing work.

2. Self-Sacrifice.

Imbibe the Spirit of Sacrifice and reflect unto others all that you receive.

3. Self-Forgetfulness.

Forget your little self in work and throw yourself into it and you will succeed.

4. Universal Love

5. Cheerfulness.

For the Work Sake. Work is its own reward.

6. Fearlessness

7. Self-reliance.

--Prof. Puran Singh in the Story Swami Rama.

Aims and objectives

PROF. PURAN SINGH MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

To project the multi-facet personality of Poet, Vedantist, Scientist Prof. Puran Singh for the benefit of present and future generations.

a) The committee will organise his Birth Anniversary on every 17th February in Delhi.

b) The committee will request the government to issue a commemorative stamp in his memory.

c) The committee will make a documentary film on his life, either through government or some other well known film producer.

d) The committee will monitor the work already done by the Punjabi University in printing the works of the poet and will undertake further printing work of in-expensive books/booklets giving in brief his achievements in various fields.

e) The committee will organise suitable functions/seminars in major cities of India, Japan and America from where the poet had received his inspirations.

f) The committee will take steps in popularising Prof. Puran Singh in the minds of the youths by means of souvenirs, badges, etc.

Any other suggestions given by the members to achieve the above aims.



Prof. Puran Singh (Standing 5th from left in the second row) with the marriage party of S. Jaswant Singh (Tegji) at Nowshera (now in Pakistan) 1927.

PROF. PURAN SINGH MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

Sardar Buta Singh - Union Minister
(Chairman) of Agriculture

MEMBERS

1. Smt. Amrita Pritam K-25, Haus Khas,
New Delhi
2. Smt. Prabjot kaur D-203, Defence Colony,
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Distt. Ropar (Pb.)
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5. Prof. Gurcharan singh 80-B, Model Town,
Patiala
6. S. Daljit Singh S. Mohan Singh Bldg.,
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7. S. Shivnaubh Singh 20, Pritam Road, Dalanwala,
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95-A,
Chittranjan Avenue,
Calcutta

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|-------------------------------|---|
| 11. Major G. S. Ahluwalia | C-517, Defence Colony,
New Delhi-110024 |
| 12. Smt. Darshan Kaur | Rosha Farm,
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In the galaxy of the poets and writers of Patohar, Puran Singh shines as the brightest star, whose writings will be read with joy for centuries..... Puran Singh is a mystic, who in the madness of his ecstasy lifts his head among the stars and dances with the sun and moon. There is music in his works, which flows as a mighty torrent irrespective of the fact whether the medium of expression is prose or poetry. His words jingle like the bangles of the Punjabi bride.....

Men like Puran Singh are citizens of the world, for their sympathies are not cramped by narrow nationalism, racialism or sectarianism. He is the poet of humanity for whom the factions of religions, nations and races, do not exist.

--Dr. M. S. Randhawa



Swami Ram Tirath

"For myself when I renounced the sense of
passession,
All things became mine, as never before, as never
before"

"So-am-I Ram Truth"